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Learning for democracy: The politics and practice of citizenship education

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It is now two decades since the Advisory Group on Citizenship, commissioned by the newly elected Labour government, recommended the introduction of statutory citizenship education. On the twentieth anniversary of the eponymously named ‘Crick Report’, this article presents the findings of a rigorous mixed-methods study of citizenship educators in the UK. This research suggests that teachers continue to lack a shared understanding of citizenship, conceptually and pedagogically, and also reveals an emphasis amongst teachers upon individualistic notions of good citizenship that are reflective of national, and increasingly global, political discourse. The findings are analysed using a new conceptual framework—the declarative–procedural paradigm—which is developed here to understand the relationship between political and normatively driven visions of democratic citizenship and classroom pedagogy. In doing so the article adds, theoretically and substantively, to the specific research pool of citizenship studies and broader debates about political disengagement.

Keywords: citizenship; teaching; anti-politics; democracy

Introduction

‘We aim at no less than a change in the political culture of this country both nationally and locally’, argued the final report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship (AGC/‘Crick Report’; DfEE/QCA, 1998), ‘for people to think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life and with the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting’. For Sir Bernard Crick (2000, 2004) it was citizenship education, introduced as a compulsory element of the national curriculum in 2002 for students in England aged 11–16, designed to enhance the political literacy of *all* young people and, through this, counter rising levels of democratic apathy. A cursory glance at the post-millennial literature on democratic engagement suggests that major global challenges remain (e.g. Runciman, 2018). Citizenship education should not be offered up as a panacea to this ‘crisis’ (Grayling, 2017), but rather as one in a range of policy responses. Yet what is still largely underdeveloped—both theoretically and empirically—is our understanding of the potential ‘pedagogic link’ between citizenship education and democratic engagement. The gap here centres not on the ability of citizenship education to affect students’ democratic outcomes per se, but rather to crystallise the impact of macro policy upon teachers’ delivery of citizenship education at the

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micro level. The nature of the latter relationship has immense potential to affect the character of the former, and it is with addressing this gap in the existing research base that this article is primarily concerned.

Initial assessments of a potential 'pedagogic link' were not positive. The 2007 Curriculum Review of Diversity and Citizenship (the Ajegbo Report), for example, found that most schools '[did] not prioritise citizenship objectives'. Since then our understanding of the delivery or social impact of citizenship education has been hampered by both the end of the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS; Keating *et al.*, 2010) and England's withdrawal from the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS). And yet, this decline in the availability of longitudinal, informed and data-driven comparative research has occurred alongside a distinct shift in the policy rhetoric surrounding citizenship and citizenship education (i.e. a shift away from active citizenship towards a more individualised approach). In light of this shift, the research presented in this article uses the twentieth anniversary of the original Crick Report to explore *how teachers conceive of their role as civic educators*.

Previous studies have examined the attitudes and preparedness of *pre-service* non-specialist teaching staff (Peterson *et al.*, 2015), the conceptions of citizenship education amongst *specialist citizenship teachers* (Leighton, 2004) and even *pre-service citizenship teachers* (Peterson & Knowles, 2009), but the vast majority of everyday citizenship teaching in secondary schools is delivered by *non-specialist in-service teaching staff* who have not previously formed the focus of sustained research. This is why Peterson *et al.* (2015, p. 261) call for 'further, more extensive research concerning how new entrants are prepared for, and indeed conceive, their important role as civic educators', and this is the precise gap in the existing literature that the research presented in this article seeks to fill. It therefore presents a mixed-method study of the views of those non-specialist teachers that undertake the vast bulk of citizenship education in the maintained sector. The core finding is that most teachers adopted an individualised approach to citizenship education, which dovetails with a more recent shift to character-focused policy discourse, but offered little in terms of Bernard Crick's deeper, more collective and engaged vision of the subject. In identifying a 'vision shift' amongst teachers, this article makes a timely, significant and original link between macro-level policy change and the role of frontline 'educators' not only in terms of promoting political engagement but also in relation to cultivating deeper cultural understandings and attachments through citizenship education.

This article is divided into five sections. The first section aims to politicise the analysis of citizenship education by revealing the manner in which ideologically conservative or progressive notions of citizenship compete in the political arena and are then frequently translated, through curricula and policy, into the educational sphere. This theoretical discussion is harnessed to a critical review of how the politics of citizenship education have evolved in the UK (and specifically England) since 1998, in the sense of its underlying values and logic. This flows into a review of the existing research on the social impact of citizenship education in the second section, which is deployed in order to construct a new conceptual framework: the declarative-procedural paradigm (DPP). This, we argue, provides an innovative way of conceiving the linkage(s) between pedagogical practice in the classroom and political conceptions of citizenship. In order to substantiate this argument, the third section outlines the

methodological approach that was used to utilise this framework in order to analyse how teachers conceive of their role as civic educators (i.e. the core focus of this article). The main findings of this research are presented in the fourth section, and serve to demonstrate the analytical traction and leverage of the DPP. The final section then reflects on the broader implications of this research in terms of both citizenship education and democratic governance.

Educating for what? The governance of citizenship in the UK

Democracy is what Walter Bryce Gallie (1956) would undoubtedly label an ‘essentially contested concept’—a ‘concept with adjectives’ to paraphrase David Collier and Steven Levitsky (1997)—which, in turn, demands some consideration of ‘what’ exactly one is ‘educating for’ in the context of democracy. The aim of this section is therefore to provide an analytical foundation upon which to locate this article’s specific focus on the delivery of citizenship education in England over the past decade. To ‘educate for democracy’ is to engage in a broader sphere of contestation regarding (*inter alia*) individual autonomy, the sphere of the state, notions of a ‘good’ society and the like. On the political Left, citizenship education is conceived within broader structural arguments and social critiques (e.g. Freire, 1990), whilst the Right pushes forward a more personally responsible notion of citizenship education based on character (e.g. Bennett *et al.*, 1999). Those in the political centre, like Benjamin Barber, have situated citizenship within a vision of ‘strong democracy’, uniting the two pillars of ‘individual responsibility’ and ‘collective participation’ within a political arena where citizens ‘with competing but overlapping interests can contrive to live together communally’ (1984, p. 11).

It is in this context of macro-political debates that Westheimer and Kahne (2004) identify three ‘kinds of citizens[hip]’—(a) personally responsible, (b) participatory and (c) justice-oriented citizenship—that may either exist independently or in hybrid form in educators’ approaches to teaching for democracy (Table 1). Steeped in the conceptual heritage of civic republicanism, Crick’s vision of citizenship education was explicitly framed as a corrective to the dominant liberal tradition with what was interpreted as its overly individualistic, litigious and apathetic approach to democratic engagement (see Crick & Lockyer, 2010). In that sense, the Crick Report (1998) presented a model for ‘justice-oriented’ active citizenship, in which politics would be ‘lived’ as much as ‘learnt’ and grounded in political literacy.

This article is, however, primarily concerned with the manner in which these deep-rooted intellectual debates have played out in English classrooms over the past two decades. The main contribution of this section is, therefore, to drill down into (a) the manner in which citizenship education was insufficiently embedded within the core curriculum and omitted from the external audit framework (‘implementation gap’) and (b) the post-2010 move towards a neoliberal ‘character’ agenda (‘vision shift’). Our argument is twofold: first, these twin challenges form the structural parameters and ideational context within which in-discipline but non-specialist teachers must currently conceive of their own role as civic educators; and second, while the ‘implementation gap’ is relatively well documented by academics and has been the topic of much protest by professional organisations, such as the Association of Citizenship

Table 1. Three kinds of citizens

	The individualised citizen	The participatory citizen	The justice-oriented citizen
<i>Nature</i>	Acts responsibly in his/her community. Works and pays taxes. Obeys laws. Recycles, gives blood. Volunteers to 'lend a hand' in times of crisis.	Active member of community organisations and/or improvement efforts. Organises community efforts to care for those in need, promote economic development or clean up the environment. Knows how government agencies work. Knows strategies for accomplishing collective tasks.	Critically assesses social, political and economic structures to see beyond surface causes. Seeks out and addresses areas of injustice. Knows about democratic social movements and how to effect systemic change.
<i>Behaviour</i>	Contributes food to a food drive.	Helps to organise a food drive.	Explores why people are hungry and acts to solve root causes.
<i>Assumptions</i>	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must have good character, they must be honest, responsible and law-abiding members of the community.	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must actively participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community structures.	To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must question, debate and change established systems and structures that reproduce patterns of injustice over time.

Source: Adapted from Westheimer and Kahne (2004, p. 240).

Teachers and the Citizenship Foundation, the 'vision shift' has received far less attention (especially in relation to its impact of frontline delivery).

The most authoritative reference point for the 'implementation gap' in the existing research base is provided by the final 2010 report of the CELS. This concluded that citizenship education faced serious concerns relating to training, staffing, monitoring and evaluation: '[i]n many cases CE is delivered by staff with little experience of, expertise in, or enthusiasm for CE' (Keating *et al.*, 2010, p. 47). The report went on to claim that 'a considerable number of teachers are still *not at all confident* about teaching about the economy, government, or European and global issues' (Keating *et al.*, 2010, p. 36; italics in original). These findings were corroborated by corresponding studies that highlighted a lack of citizenship education subject networks and identity; these studies pointed to the academic heterogeneity of trainee teachers and their lack of experience of learning the subject themselves, the frequency with which they were left alone as the 'expert' in a school and their lack of generic secondary knowledge about government and politics (Hayward & Jerome, 2009; Jerome, 2012). In 2006 the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) concluded: 'only a few schools... have created a coherent programme which pupils can recognise as an entity' (2006, para. 69). As such, it is possible to view citizenship education as a high-

level symbolic policy that promoted an idea of embedded and inclusive citizenship but was never actually embedded or included within the framework of educational meta-governance within schools (see Bache *et al.*, 2015).

The 2010 General Election—and the formation of the Liberal Democrat–Conservative coalition government—spurned a less-documented but no less significant ‘vision shift’ in the governance of citizenship education. Here the politics of citizenship education (discussed above), manifested in an ideological shift to the Right, are particularly apparent and important. By contrast to the unambiguously Aristotelian notion of character developed in the last decade by the Jubilee Centre (see Jubilee Centre, 2015), the coalition and Conservative governments have operationalised the term as a narrower, more instrumental set of ‘traits, attributes and behaviours that underpin success in education and work’ (DfE, 2015). To the extent that the virtue ethics of character education relate to important moral relations between individuals, there is an element of cross-over with citizenship education. However, the character agenda—focused on personal rather than public ethics—downplays the knowledge and (collective) skills of political literacy, and in doing so undermines citizenship education as learning for democracy. In its latest iteration—specifically the ‘Essential Life Skills’ package presented by the government in 2017 (DfE, 2017)—character education is an increasingly econocentric strategy that aims to anticipate post-Brexit market volatility and as such sidesteps a Crickean vision of collective, active (and justice-oriented) citizenship to focus on volunteering, grit and resilience.

Whilst this article has, thus far, accepted a normative stance in promoting the Crick Report as a reference point for good citizenship education, it acknowledges that the report also fell short in developing the connections between apathy and inequality implicit in a ‘justice-oriented’ understanding of citizenship. Put another way, the report successfully traversed liberal and republican theorising to advocate ‘deep learning’ done through experience of critical participation, but its recommendations for the curriculum overlooked anti-racism and parallel structural inequalities that inhibit political participation (Figueroa, 2004; Osler & Starkey, 2006; Osler, 2008). This is particularly surprising given that its publication coincided with the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, which had not only exposed institutional racism in Britain but also identified schools as the setting to combat related issues of equality and diversity (Home Office, 1999). The Ajegbo Report (Ajegbo *et al.*, 2007, p. 97), which added a fourth set of outcomes to citizenship education titled ‘identity and diversity; living together in the UK’, did little more than depoliticise the challenges of multiculturalism and social integration, and in doing so arguably left unchallenged existing social, economic and political inequalities (cf. Council of Europe, 2000; Gillborn, 2006). However, in the context of this article it is worth emphasising that, as Ben Kisby (2017, pp. 13–14) has argued, the discontinuities between the approaches of New Labour and the recent coalition/Conservative governments are greater than the similarities.

The key differences here are between a character-driven approach aimed at inculcating values via personal responsibility and deference to authority and a civic republican approach to citizenship in the Crick Report that included respect for shared values as reached through critical debate and awareness of social similarities and differences. What is currently missing from the research base is any detailed understanding of whether (1) the ‘implementation gap’ continues to be a problem, whether it has

grown or narrowed and (2) the degree to which this post-2010 ‘vision shift’ may have affected how teachers conceive their role as civic educators and deliver citizenship education in the classroom. The evidence base for either foci is lacking, but both are key to our understanding of how and why citizenship education succeeds or fails.

The impact of citizenship education

The focus of this article—*how teachers conceive of their role as civic educators*—matters because the existing research base clearly demonstrates that citizenship education can have a significant impact where pupils receive both *declarative knowledge* (i.e. facts, concepts and relationships between these) and *procedural knowledge* (i.e. how to carry out actions) (Schraw, 2006). This assertion builds on an extant literature from around the world which shows that (a) the transmission of civic knowledge about formal political systems underpins critical and engaged citizenship (e.g. Torney-Purta *et al.*, 2001) and (b) exposure to a democratic school environment and a classroom climate forged around deliberation and pupil voice can impact on students’ political outcomes (e.g. Martens & Gainous, 2012).

In England, CELS data show, for example, that ‘consistent exposure’ to citizenship education across secondary school can be a significant predictor of young people’s civic engagement in terms of efficacy, participation and political knowledge (Whiteley, 2014). Within the terms of success laid out in the AGC report (DfEE/QCA, 1998, pp. 11–13), citizenship education had, where it was received consistently, started to achieve success. Avril Keating and Jan Germen Janmaat (2016) have also conducted path analysis on CELS data to show that those participants who experienced maximum exposure to citizenship education in school were 14.9% more likely to vote at 18 than those who received minimum delivery in school; similarly, expressive political participation in adulthood increased by 13.1% between the two groups, even after controlling for socio-demographic variables. This research supports previous claims that childhood citizenship education can have lasting effects into adulthood (McFarland & Thomas, 2006) and builds on political socialisation studies that have suggested political habits and identities forged in adolescence continue to shape attitudes and behaviours into adulthood (Delli Carpini, 1989).

However, the existing research has not previously conceptualised the outcomes of citizenship education within a framework that unites the research on classroom pedagogy (e.g. Brown & Campione, 1990) and the broader ‘politics’ of citizenship as a concept. It is for exactly this reason that Figure 1 harnesses the available research and develops Westheimer and Kahne’s (2004) focus on three ‘kinds of citizens’ (Table 1) in order to construct an innovative analytical framework. The DPP predicts, for example, that a fact-heavy (i.e. declarative) curriculum without commensurate training in procedural skills will produce personally responsible citizens who understand their individual liberties and responsibilities without the capacity to challenge or engage with political structures. The DPP anticipates that young people will only be equipped as justice-oriented citizens when they have received citizenship education that is rich in both declarative and procedural skills.

Structured in this way, the DPP unites research on the input and output of citizenship education and builds on the theoretical work of more generalised models in

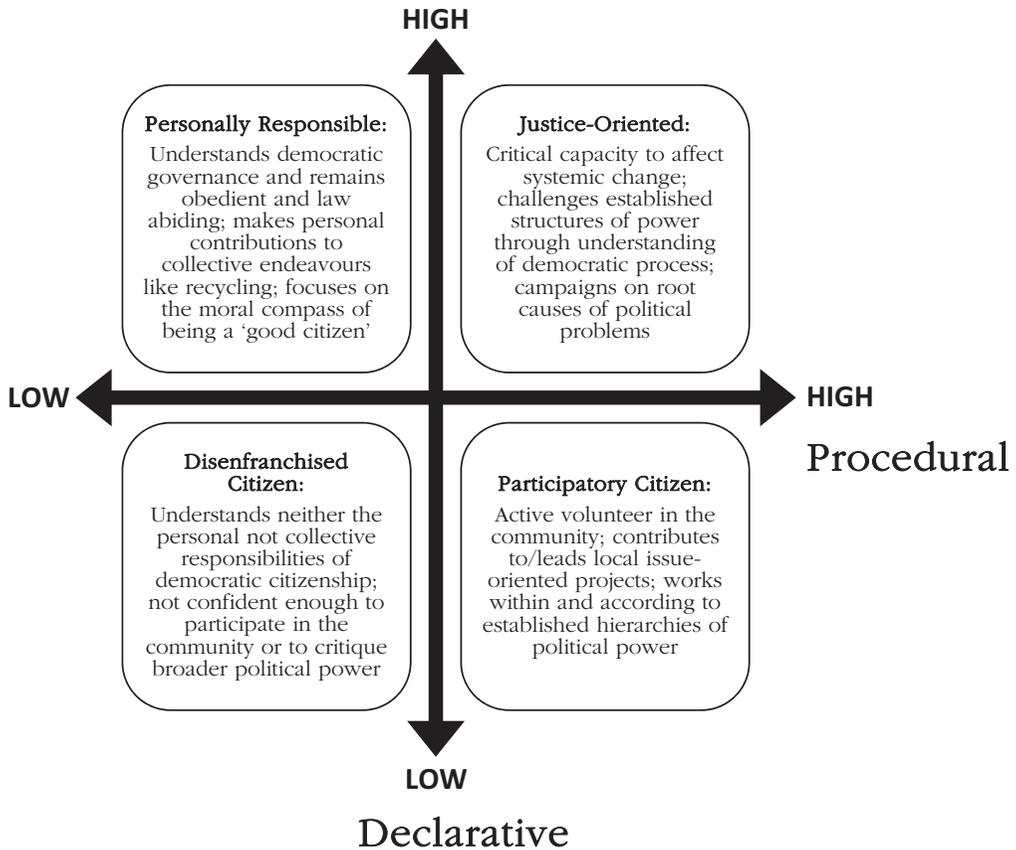


Figure 1. The declarative-procedural paradigm [adapted from Westheimer and Kahne’s (2004) ‘Three Kinds of Citizens’].

education studies, such as Creemer’s (1994) comprehensive model of educational effectiveness. Creemer’s model argues that student learning and achievement are the result of multilevel influences, and specifically that systemic policy contexts and school-level factors affect student achievement as mediated by classroom and student-level factors. In Creemer’s model, those factors at higher levels are conditional for those at lower levels, and as such it provides a neat heuristic for analysing the line of contingent causation in educational achievement. However, Creemer’s (1994) model does not go far enough in uniting these multilevel inputs with different ‘political’ conceptions of the role of young people as future citizens.

A rich global literature has attempted to develop evidence of a ‘pedagogic link’ by fitting causal pathways between procedural and declarative styles of citizenship education and inventories of civic or social competences (e.g. Gutiérrez & Lozano, 2015). These studies are useful insofar as they justify the capacity of citizenship education to affect democratic outcomes per se, but they fail to combine their insights into clear or trans-situational models for future research, or—crucially—to comprehend their results in the political contexts in which those ‘competences’ may be variably operationalised. Building directly upon the generic foundations of Creemer’s

(1994) model, the DPP is presented in order to (a) develop our understanding of a pedagogic link in citizenship education that accounts for macro policy churn, (b) advance conceptual sharing between education and politics research and (c) propose parsimonious links between classroom pedagogy and politically informed citizenship outcomes that can be utilised in future research programmes. It is neither possible nor necessary to develop the DPP in greater depth in this single article. Rather, this study tests its broad validity as an analytical heuristic in this field by, specifically, applying it to new empirical data on non-specialist teachers' understanding of, and pedagogical approach to, teaching citizenship education in the post-CELS period.

Methodology

The focus of this article is on the politics and governance of citizenship education in England. It offers the first analysis of *in-service non-specialist teachers* in order to assess (a) how non-specialists perceive and approach the teaching of citizenship compared to pre-eminent political conceptions of the subject and (b) the extent to which front-line teachers believe that systematic failings identified in the implementation of citizenship education, specifically regarding initial teacher training (ITT) and continued professional development (CPD), have been rectified. Findings are based on a three-phase mixed-methods study that ran from September 2015 to October 2016. The research was informed by the existing research base (see the sections above) and focused on three core research questions:

RQ1 How do in-service teachers vary in their understanding, and perceptions, of citizenship education?

RQ2 What are the opinions of in-service teachers on current citizenship education in schools and national policy in this area of education?

RQ3 To what extent do in-service non-specialist teachers feel that their initial teacher training and ongoing professional development opportunities have prepared them to support students in becoming active and responsible citizens?

The main phase of the research revolved around the collection of survey data from 110 in-service teachers from over 60 schools based around the country. All respondents had either completed a PGCE at a Higher Education Institution prior to taking up a teaching post, or had completed their qualifications 'in-post' through training providers such as Teach First or Schools Direct. The sample population was 60% female/40% male and participants ranged in age from early 20s to over 60. Participants ranged in their teaching specialism across 15 different curriculum areas and only three had any training experience in citizenship and were currently teaching citizenship as their main curriculum subject. All participants were secondary school teachers in the maintained sector, thus allowing this study to focus on that age bracket of education (11–16) where citizenship remains a statutory requirement. Participants' anonymity was respected and participation was entirely voluntary.

To begin with, surveys were distributed to participants prior to voluntary sessions on 'Education Policy and Political Education' at two national teaching conferences

held in Leeds and London during July 2016. Following the questionnaire design of similar studies (Revell & Arthur, 2007; Peterson *et al.*, 2015), the survey was used to explore teachers' perceptions of citizenship and citizenship education. The questionnaire was constructed in four main sections, the first three of which asked participants to respond using a five-point Likert scale. Section I focused on *teachers' understanding of citizenship education*, providing four statements regarding the meaning of citizenship education which participants were invited to rate depending on whether or not they agreed. These statements were designed *a priori* to match the 'three kinds of citizens' (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) used in the theoretical approach to this study (Table 1). Section II focused on *teachers' reflections on their own pre- and in-service training*, and the extent to which this had prepared them to teach citizenship. Section III asked participants where they believed *the responsibility for teaching citizenship* lay. The available responses to this question differentiated between school level, individual teachers and pastoral staff, and between the medium of a discrete subject or all subjects. Section IV gathered bio-data on gender, age and subject specialism.

Focus groups were selected as a complementary method to explore further the perceptions, beliefs and understandings of citizenship and citizenship education that had become apparent from the survey data. Twenty-five of the participants volunteered to take part in five professionally facilitated focus groups, each containing five participants, held between July and August 2016.¹ Trained facilitators, drawn from either the Crick Centre at the University of Sheffield or the Parliamentary Education Service, were prepared according to a topic guide that covered: (a) participants' understandings of the word 'citizenship' and their own civic actions; (b) participants' attitudes towards their preparation for civic education both in school and during pre-service training; (c) participants' thoughts on current citizenship education (both the curriculum and in-school provision in their current or previous institutions); and (d) participants' understandings of citizenship education within related policies currently receiving attention in schools [such as 'Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development' (SMSC), 'Prevent' or 'Fundamental British Values'; for more information, see DfE, 2014].

Research findings

For each of the core research questions identified above, this section presents preliminary statistics drawn from the survey that are used to preface investigation of the qualitative responses from the focus groups. The main purpose of the present article is to understand the extent to which teachers differ in their perceptions of citizenship as an educational and political concept, and in their pedagogical approach to teaching it (RQ1). This is supplemented with further analysis of teachers' opinions on citizenship policy and teacher training (RQ2, RQ3).

RQ1 How do in-service teachers vary in their understanding, and perceptions, of citizenship education?

The survey started out to establish teachers' own awareness of citizenship as a contested concept among educators in general, before delving deeper into their own perceptions of the term. Three statements (Table 2) were predesigned to elicit links to

key output indicators for the DPP: specifically political conceptions of citizenship (personally responsible, justice-oriented and participatory citizenship) and pedagogical style (*declarative-* or *procedural-*based teaching and learning). The brevity of these questions was a forced consequence of the time constraints on data collection, and therefore deliberately intended to reveal trends that could be explored further in the focus groups and future research projects.

The sample population was split evenly between those who disagreed that citizenship is a shared concept and those who agreed or weren't sure (Table 2). This result might indicate either a lack of communication over political matters within the teaching community, or the diversity of understanding of the concept among non-specialists. However, responses to the four citizenship statements highlighted subtle differences in the use of the upper end of the Likert scale. Participants were more confident when strongly agreeing with statements (1a) declarative-based pedagogy and personally responsible citizenship and (1c) procedural-based pedagogy and participatory citizenship. Respondents were less confident in strongly agreeing with statements (1b) and (1d), which were designed to reflect the causal investigation associated with justice-oriented citizenship (1b) and citizenship as a combination of both declarative- and procedural-based pedagogy (1d). Put another way, when presented with

Table 2. Participant understanding of citizenship as an educational concept (% , $n = 110$)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Citizenship is a coherent concept, the meaning of which is shared by educators.	8	42	20	28	2
1a. Citizenship education should help pupils to develop knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens.	1	1	1	29	68
1b. Citizenship education should help pupils to develop skills of enquiry and communication.	1	0	6	36	58
1c. Citizenship education should help pupils to develop skills of participation and responsible action.	1	0	1	29	69
1d. When developing skills of participation and responsible action, pupils should also and at the same time acquire and apply knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens.	1	0	1	45	53

citizenship outcomes, non-specialist teachers demonstrate the greatest hesitancy when it comes to those conceptions underpinning the top-right quadrant of the DPP.

To explore these findings further, the focus group transcripts were coded using the criteria of the DPP. Statements were only included for analysis if they explicitly expressed (a) participants' personal reflections on what they do as citizens themselves or (b) participants' reflections on teaching students citizenship and the 'type' of citizen they think the subject *should* produce. In total, 62 explicit statements were made with associations that fit the criteria, and these were mapped onto the DPP for analysis.

Just over 48% of these comments described citizenship as a personally responsible concept, 29% as participatory and only 22% as justice-oriented. These figures can be readjusted to represent the *number* of teachers making these comments. When we remove all participants with any prior training in citizenship education whatsoever, or those with a cognate specialism (history, politics or sociology), or a degree in politics, only 13% of what we term here 'true' non-specialists talk of citizenship and citizenship education in justice-oriented terms. By contrast, personally responsible and participatory conceptions were equally prevalent in the non-specialist population (43.5% of contributors each).

Where participants talked of citizenship as either a personally responsible or participatory concept, they were likely to use these two conceptions interchangeably. For example, Participant No. 5 started by focusing on a localised participatory notion of citizenship:

I think engagement and community as well, so the local community as well as the wider community and getting students to become active citizens, knowing what's happening in their local area and helping in a positive way.

However, less than 5 minutes later, the same participant utilised a more personally responsible conception:

I think being a citizen is being a good citizen and being a role model and I think young people look for that but they can't necessarily find it. . . I think for me it's about demonstrating, as you say, what good behaviour looks like and doing it on a day to day basis. . . It [citizenship] can be through other areas, pastoral area for example.

By contrast, teachers who talked about citizenship in justice-oriented terms were both more likely to stress the political literacy side of citizenship and more likely to sustain their interpretation. They were also more likely to vocalise the teaching of citizenship in terms of both *declarative* and *procedural* knowledge, therefore fulfilling the theoretical expectations of the DPP. However, just 10 explicit references were made to the joint declarative and procedural aspects of citizenship education, by just six participants (five of whom also spoke of citizenship as a justice-oriented concept). Participant No. 1 (psychology teacher) was particularly clear:

I think it's important as well that we learn to question things so not just accepting things that are in the news and questioning things that are going on in society. Having an enquiry, the skills of enquiry [evidence of justice-oriented citizenship]. But a lot of it looks at the skills of citizenship like group work, active participation, and all sorts really. As well as like the knowledge side of it. . . democracy [declarative and procedural knowledge].

Three key inferential findings stand out. Firstly, among non-specialist teachers there is a significant tendency to frame citizenship and the purpose of citizenship education within ‘political’ conceptions of personally responsible and participatory citizenship. Secondly, training matters—even among this relatively small sample, ‘training’ experiences differentiated between participants’ understanding of citizenship and citizenship education. Finally, the DPP conceptual framework set out in Figure 1 successfully captured practitioners’ perceptions of citizenship education and associated pedagogy; at the same time it demonstrated that, among this sample of non-specialists, only a small percentage sit within the quadrant that combines mixed pedagogical input and justice-oriented output (top right in Figure 1).

RQ2 What are the opinions of in-service teachers on current citizenship education in schools and national policy in this area of education?

There was a strong sense in the survey data that citizenship is not seen as a priority in secondary education (Figure 2); only 12% thought otherwise. However, the strength of this agreement is only partially reflected in questions about the curriculum, both at a national and school level (see Figure 2). Given the findings for *RQ1*, the split in responses across these two questions—as well as the central hesitation—would seem to intuitively reflect the difference in understandings of citizenship education as a concept. The statements presented to participants (see Figure 2) were directly linked to previous questions about the meaning and purpose of citizenship education, on which participants had already differed in their responses. It is interesting that the open question about citizenship as a priority, which does not discriminate between understandings of the term, attracts much greater agreement among the sample. This would suggest that while different conceptions of what a citizen should be will influence teachers’ belief in—and evaluation of—a school or national citizenship curriculum, teachers of varying understandings of the concept are able to agree about the *general* neglect of citizenship within the education system. Although the sample size is

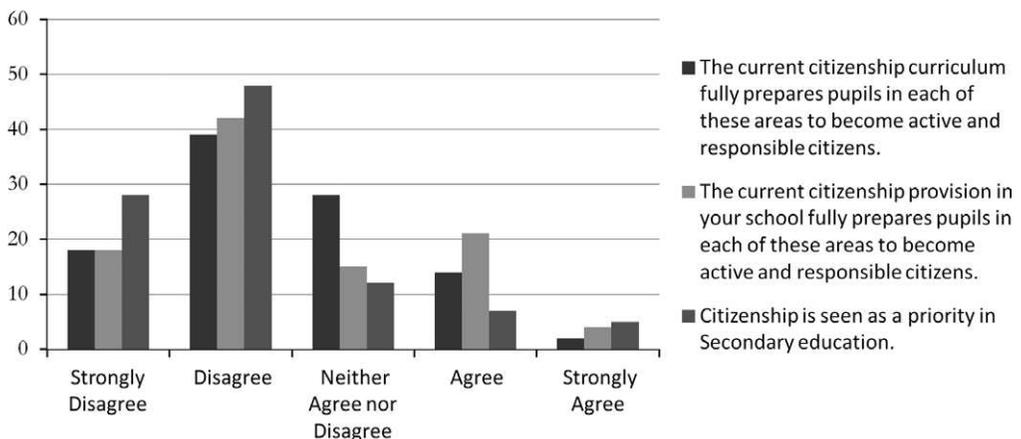


Figure 2. How do in-service teachers evaluate the delivery and national value of Citizenship education? Participant responses (%).

small, the data suggest a worrying trend away from citizenship education in England altogether. In the absence of either declarative or procedural citizenship education, our future citizens may be denuded of their capacity to engage meaningfully with *their* democratic system (bottom-left quadrant, DPP).

The focus groups reinforced these results and revealed two distinct themes. The first was a general agreement that *citizenship had been marginalised in recent years generally, and by other policies in particular*. Participants talked of SMSC education, the Prevent programme and Fundamental British Values, which they thought were similar in many ways to citizenship but which reactively targeted wider public crises such as radicalisation and terrorism. Participant No. 5, for example, commented: ‘the curriculum model, as it is set up now, does not fit in terms of teaching subjects like citizenship. The government seem to be wanting to marginalise it, so that it is an add-on’. Participants were also able to reflect on their own differing approaches to citizenship and how this impacted on the delivery of citizenship-related government policies.

Facilitator: *What about the rest of you? What are your experiences with it [citizenship]?*

Participant 8: *We have to identify the SMSC elements that we are addressing in each unit of work. So it [citizenship] has to be explicitly identified and then in theory in the lessons that are taught there should be explicit reference made to SMSC or British Values and that’s what’s looked for if you’re being observed or if someone is reviewing your scheme of work, that was in our quality assurance procedure, how well done it is I think will vary massively from teacher to teacher, and their own personal opinion of how much they value it. I think it’ll be a very mixed picture.*

Participants also believed that citizenship education was failing because it is *not a priority compared to facilitating subjects*.² As Participant No. 2 reflected:

If we treat citizenship/PSHE/whatever as a bolt-on thing, then the students will only ever see it as a bolt-on thing.

This opinion was shared across focus groups and reinforced with reference to recent changes in the ethos of secondary education:

[E]specially now all the curriculums have changed in all your subject areas [and] become a lot more content heavy with new specifications it means teachers are more squeezed than before to get through more content, so I think it’s probably the worst timing for it [citizenship] in a way. (Participant 8)

Such cognitive reflection on the pedagogical commitments of the 2014 reforms implemented by Michael Gove as Secretary of State for Education suggests that, through the prism of the DPP, teachers do not naturally see citizenship as fitting within a declarative-based curriculum. However, taking account of results for *RQ1*, the DPP may also allow us to capture an implicit link between this systemic-level educational ethos of the coalition and Conservative governments, and frontline tendencies towards teaching citizenship as a personally responsible conception (top-left quadrant in Figure 1).

RQ3 To what extent do in-service non-specialist teachers feel that their initial teacher training and ongoing professional development opportunities have prepared them to support students in becoming active and responsible citizens?

In Section II of the survey, four questions were asked about participants' experiences of training for citizenship, both pre- and in service. The first three questions (2a–2c) delineated the training focus according to the three conceptions of citizens that have been discussed throughout this article.³ There was overwhelming evidence across all three categories that participants felt they had not been prepared at all, or only partially prepared, to teach for each conception of citizenship (Table 3).

There are two important inferences to make from this data. Firstly, that non-specialist teacher training programmes are not adequately preparing their pupils in general for the task of civic education, even though new government policies like SMSC are pushing this forward as a cross-curricular responsibility. Secondly, that where non-specialist teacher training programmes *are* touching on citizenship, they are more frequently teaching it from a justice-oriented perspective. If this is the case, then further investigation of the pedagogy behind this approach is required to ascertain whether instruction is based solely on teaching declarative knowledge of controversial and sensitive topics that arise within the host subject or combined with non-traditional uses of procedural knowledge that may be alien to the host subject. If so, then this research may be able to identify a beneficial correlation between teacher training and the output of the DPP. For the purposes of policy recommendations, this finding also shows that good training models already exist for replication. This is clearly a policy priority, reinforced in this study by the dissonance between participants' sense of responsibility vis-à-vis citizenship (89% of participants felt responsible or fully responsible) and their sense of (un-)preparedness to act on this responsibility.

Four supporting themes emerged in the focus groups. Firstly, participants were quick to stress the *lack of provision during ITT*. Where participants tried openly to

Table 3. Participant reflections on the efficacy of teacher training for citizenship education (% , n = 110)

To what extent did your initial teacher training programme prepare you. . .	Don't Know	Did Not Prepare	Partially Prepared	Prepared	Fully Prepared
2a. to support your pupils in becoming responsible citizens? (<i>Personally Responsible</i>)	5	49	35	9	3
2b. to teach pupils about controversial and sensitive political/social/economic issues? (<i>Justice-Oriented</i>)	4	43	33	16	5
2c. to help pupils learn through active learning programmes that take place in the wider community? (<i>Participatory Citizenship</i>)	6	55	26	11	3
2d. To what extent does your ongoing CPD prepare you to do these things?	10	32	38	17	3

reflect on the positive provision in their ITT, citizenship was described as more of an ethos than a training focus.

We trained on the same scheme [to number 4] and I think, I can't really remember it being explicitly taught but I think by the very nature of the scheme it kind of comes across because the whole point of Teach First is to try to combat inequality in education, which therefore lends itself to that whole citizenship mantra a bit more but I don't remember it being explicit. (Participant 8)

This neatly connects with the second trend to come out of the focus groups, that *there is a lot of appetite for citizenship training among teachers*. It became clear across focus groups that this motivation was partly driven by fear. This was expressed as a by-product of two pressures on teachers: (1) current government policies like SMSC and Fundamental British Values that will be enforced by Ofsted; (2) the growing salience of controversial issues in the classroom and the challenge of remaining a-political. For example:

You're trying so, so hard not to say the wrong thing at times. You have to be so careful with some of the things you're discussing, and celebrating multiculturalism and diversity without stereotyping. It's so difficult. Just look at some of the topics you're addressing [in school]. Especially with the whole Prevent strategy. At times I get quite worried about teaching the diversity of Britain. . . We're all good people and we try our best but you never know. . . I would like some training on certain strategies. (Participant 21)

The third training-related issue to arise in the focus groups was the relative *lack of attention given to citizenship training in schools compared to the priorities of marking, differentiation and general teaching and learning strategies*. Teaching workloads often feature in the news; in 2015 the NUT surveyed over 16,000 teachers and found that 87% knew someone who had given up the profession in the previous two years due to excessive workload. It was evident among the participants that many just don't have the time to seek out extra training on citizenship when their schools maintain such a tasking focus on administration and meeting Ofsted criteria. The following example is particularly poignant:

it's just an add-on, it becomes something that you do at the end after you've done everything else that's important and that's an issue in terms of both staff training, teaching time, planning. (Participant 10)

The final theme identified in these discussions was the admittance among participants that *non-specialist teaching staff generally lack the political literacy to do citizenship properly*. As Participant 7 commented:

I think general knowledge among staff as well, even about local issues or how the government works, I think even if we have a well-versed staff body here it's not necessarily the case nationwide that we assume teachers are politically involved or even politically aware.

There is an interesting contradiction here between the level of meta-cognition reflected in the focus groups, where non-specialist staff were able to reflect on their own lack of training or political literacy for citizenship, and the survey choices on the questionnaire. Most participants made definite choices on the questionnaire towards either end of the Likert scale, for example about the neglect of citizenship in education or to assert certain skills as requisite for the teaching of citizenship. However, to

do so would require an understanding of the concept in the first place. This contradiction might reflect two important implications for this study: that educators bring different ‘political’ understandings of citizenship to their job with or without formal training or previous education in this area (*RQ1*) and that these political conceptions of citizenship are a subconscious presence for educators in their jobs. The latter will require further research.

Discussion

This article set out to investigate the impact of macro education policy on the attitudes and practice of educators in the post-CELS period. In doing so, it sought to clarify a pedagogic link between school-based citizenship education and democratic outcomes. To achieve this goal, this article presents a new conceptual framework in the DPP for conceiving the politics and practice of citizenship education. Taken together, the empirical results show that:

- (a) the structural weaknesses associated with Labour’s implementation of citizenship education after 2002, particularly in relation to teacher training, have not been rectified;
- (b) few non-specialist teachers embrace the ‘justice-oriented’ and mixed pedagogy approach that underpinned the Crickian vision in 1998;
- (c) teacher training has a significant impact on teachers’ attitudes towards citizenship;
- (d) while teachers tend to criticise curricula provision for citizenship, their political conceptions of citizenship overwhelmingly align with the individualised vision put forward by the coalition government in 2010–15.

One of the most influential findings of this article is the link between the ‘politics of’ citizenship in elite policy and the vernacular of frontline educators. Reid *et al.* (2010, p. 5) argue that ‘there is never a one-to-one correspondence between the state’s agenda and its realisation in the classroom’, but this article would tentatively contend that, dependent on longitudinal analysis across governments, the strong national focus on the ‘Big Society’ (Espiet-Kilty, 2016) and individualised character development since 2010 (Kisby, 2017) has had a direct impact on educators’ attitudes to citizenship education in the classroom. In particular, a macro emphasis on the *good* citizen, as opposed to the *active* citizen promoted in the Crick Report, encourages rather than challenges those teaching staff who, for lack of training, already struggle to identify and assess citizenship learning at the micro level and who, instead, already confuse active citizenship with non-politicised service learning/volunteering (Jerome, 2011).

Service learning typically links the curriculum to an existing community ‘need’; steeped in the experiential learning ideals of Dewey (1997/1938), it combines procedural-heavy pedagogy with a communitarian vision of citizenship typical of the participatory citizen in the DPP (e.g. Sardoc *et al.*, 2006; Biesta, 2011). Insofar as this article finds evidence of a ‘service-learning mindset’ among teachers in an English context, it complements the findings of Jerome (2011) and the 2006 interim report of the CELS (Ireland *et al.*, 2006, p. 43): specifically that the concept of *participation* is misunderstood, or at least underdeveloped, for the teaching of active citizenship in

English schools. However, this article goes further in conceptualising multiple citizenship outcomes and harnessing them to teachers' interpretations of citizenship education as theory and practice. In particular, it shows that the tendency for teachers to confuse active citizenship with service learning extends to equally worrisome beliefs about citizenship as an individualised set of responsibilities. Far from the 'political interactions' favoured by Crick (1982, 2002), this study finds that teachers are more inclined to understand citizenship through 'public' or 'personal' referents such as good manners, volunteering or extra-curricular hobbies.

This article makes an additional contribution by theorising and demonstrating links between macro education policy since 2010 and various conceptions of citizenship education in the teaching body. Using the framework of the DPP, it suggests that a systemic policy vernacular of *character* education (cf. Kisby, 2017) has impacted on the frontline delivery of *citizenship* education. The individualised and market-based emphasis on 'personally responsible' citizenship found among teachers in this study may be just as easily read from recent curriculum guidance on teaching 'character' (DfE, 2015; for a comparison with previous guidance, see Jerome, 2011). On the one hand, this move is indicative of centuries-long thought on the Right of politics, whereby Westminster's tradition of 'mobilising consent' has been used as a fillip to discourage reforms to citizen culture that might threaten the UK's hierarchical governance structures. On the other hand, the manifestation of this political agenda in the classroom is extremely concerning in the context of increasing political apathy (see Grayling, 2017). Anticipating post-Brexit market instability, it is possible that the econocentric conceptions of citizenship peddled by the Conservative government, and made manifest in the theory and data presented in this article, will become a key electoral strategy to counter, or even depoliticise, rising unemployment and social fragmentation in coming years. This link demands further research.

By comparison to a conservative model of character education, this article favours the model of active citizenship proposed in the Crick Report (DfEE/QCA, 1998) 20 years ago. As illustrated in the DPP, this politicised vision appears to 'fit' far better with a justice-oriented conception of citizenship and, in turn, offers more in the way of preparing young people for *critical* participation in politics. However, this article has already touched upon the misgivings of the Crick Report; insofar as it continues to provide a blueprint for citizenship education today, it also requires revisions to its style and content. Above all, politics is more complex than it was two decades ago, and the associations of interest underpinning local, regional and national communities beget a host of new (and digital) spheres in which young people can interact publicly. Whilst this article does make a normative stance in prioritising the Crick Report and justice-oriented citizenship, it recognises a need, therefore, to update the former in line with the principles of the latter. What we call here 'Crick II' should, for example, explore the 'politics of' these new spheres and the citizenship learning [opportunities] they might embody, as well as the contemporary and often controversial inequalities produced by the new associations they engender. Moreover, in order to overcome some of the challenges posed by citizenship education for teaching staff—as discussed in the methodology section—this new approach must offer greater acknowledgement of the potential reciprocity between sites of service learning and political literacy, and in turn identify the 'political' learning to be gained from a

broader array of ‘public’ interactions (Habermas, 1999; cf. Crick, 2002; Annette, 2008).

This leads to an additional substantive finding, the issue of expertise. In 2013 Ofsted (p. 6) recommended ‘that all staff who deliver citizenship education receive the necessary training to teach it effectively’. Unlike previous studies that have only focused on the impact of formal training for citizenship education, this article uses the DPP (Figure 1) and close analysis of focus group data to show that informal training can also differentiate between non-specialists’ understanding and application of citizenship education. In this respect this article shows that teachers of all specialisms, who are now engaged in the general mission of civic education through a variety of school approaches (see Keating *et al.*, 2010), are already bringing their own conceptions of citizenship—what we term educational political agendas—to bear in the classroom and their teaching *for* democracy. Further, the data here indicates that these agendas, where neither formal nor informal training has been received, are inconsistent with the pedagogical and ideological vision put forward by Crick and crystallised in the DPP. In this context a formalised training scheme, within non-specialist ITT, could not be more important to (a) guard against the anti-democratic scenario in which our future citizens’ education becomes a lightning rod for party political interests and (b) ensure that citizens receive a holistic political education that prepares them to be much more than an obedient, employable workforce in the decades to come.

NOTES

¹ Ethics approval (Ref. 008072; 23.03.2016) for this study was granted by the Department of Politics at the University of Sheffield. All participants were approached freely and received a detailed participant information sheet. Focus group participants also signed consent forms to grant permission for their comments to be reproduced anonymously in research output.

² The term ‘facilitating subjects’ is often used to describe those advanced-level subjects that are often required for entry to competitive degree courses. These subjects include: Biology, English Literature, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, History, Modern and Classical Languages, Maths and Further Maths. More information can be found in the Russell Group’s latest guide *Informed Choices*: russellgroup.ac.uk/media/5457/informed-choices-2016.pdf.

³ Note that these labels were not communicated to the respondents.

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